

EPA REGION III

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Wednesday, April 18, 2012

***** PM HOT LIST *****

New air-quality rules expected today for Marcellus operations

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE Marcellus Shale operations in Pennsylvania and oil and gas operations nationwide will eventually need to reduce air pollution emissions to comply with new federal rules set to be issued later today. The first comprehensive update in decades of regulations governing the oil and gas operations, the new rules will require the drilling industry to capture air pollutants from well-completion work, including hydraulic fracturing or "fracking," pipelines, storage tanks and compressor stations. But the Obama administration, which has supported development of natural gas shale reserves, has extended the deadline for compliance with the new rules by two years and exempted wells drilled in low-pressure areas that produce less emissions.

AP Newsbreak: EPA issues first-ever rules to control air pollution from fractured gas wells **ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Updated: Wednesday, April 18, 11:37 AM
(AP) WASHINGTON — The Obama administration is issuing the first-ever standards to control air pollution from gas wells that are drilled using a method called hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. But the administration, which has strongly backed natural gas drilling, made significant concessions to the oil and gas industry. **The regulation is expected to be officially announced later Wednesday.** Administration officials who briefed The Associated Press in advance of the announcement said drillers would be given an additional two years to comply with the rules. Wells drilled in low-pressure areas which release less air pollution would also be exempt. Hydraulic fracturing has spawned a natural gas-drilling boom, but has raised environmental concerns for its toll on water and air.

Leading Companies Already Meet EPA's "Fracking" Air Pollution Standards

NRDC - SWITCHBOARD One of the biggest sources of dangerous air pollution from natural gas "fracking" is the whoosh of pollution that rushes from the well, like popping the top on a soda can, in the first few days after fracking is completed and the well is about to start production. What comes out are hundreds of tons of chemicals ranging from cancer-causing benzene, smog-forming volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and climate-changing methane. Across the industry, which fracks or refracks more than 20,000 wells each year, that amounts to millions of tons of pollution that does serious harm to human health and the environment. These are not only dangerous pollutants. They are also wasted products that can be recovered at a profit – across the industry, more

than a half a trillion cubic feet of wasted gas. ...Later today, the Environmental Protection Agency is going to issue common-sense and money-saving standards to begin curbing this pollution by requiring drillers to undertake "green completions" (also called "reduced emission completions") – using mobile, trailer-mounted tanks and equipment pictured below to capture these gases before they escape into the air and route them back into pipelines for sale as natural gas and other valuable chemicals.

Residents question safety, oversight at meeting about natural gas compressor station explosion

SCRANTON TIMES-DISPATCH MONTROSE - State regulators and natural gas company officials faced nearly two hours of questions from residents about safety, air pollution and eroded public confidence during a briefing Tuesday night at Montrose Area High School about a recent natural gas compressor station explosion. Officials with the state Department of Environmental Protection and Williams, the company that owns the compressor station, sought to fill in gaps in the public understanding of the explosion and fire at the Lathrop station on March 29 and reassure citizens that the operations are safe.

DEP citing company for contaminating Greene County creek

UNIONTOWN HERALD-STANDARD A company constructing a natural gas pipeline in Greene County is facing a state citation for allegedly allowing 500 gallons of bentonite drilling mud to escape from a bore hole into a tributary of Dunkard Creek. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) said it will issue a notice of violation to Equitrans for the "mess" in Garrison Fork, a small tributary in Gilmore Township, said DEP spokesman John Poister. About 500 gallons of a mixture of bentonite, a non-toxic clay-like substance used in drilling, and water flowed out of a hole being drilled under Garrison Fork and entered the creek on April 11, Poister said. Equitrans was in the process of drilling a 2,800 foot hole under the creek for a 24-inch pipeline when the "inadvertent return of drilling mud" occurred, he said.

DNREC seeks to create nontidal wetland program

CAPE GAZETTE Delaware environmental leaders want to create a state program to protect nontidal wetlands. Marshes disappearing faster than replenished. Forty years after the Clean Water Act offered protection for wetlands, Delaware continues to lose them at an increasing rate. Nontidal wetlands disappear primarily because of housing developments and agriculture. Delaware has no management program to protect nontidal wetlands, instead leaving their protection and delineation to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. To assess the loss wetlands, Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control compared aerial maps shot in 1992 and in 2007 to determine where wetlands have been lost. During the 15-year span, scientists found, Delaware lost more than 3,000 acres of vegetated wetlands. This is a 10 percent annual increase over losses prior to 1992, said Mark Biddle, environmental scientist with DNREC's watershed assessment section. The primary problem seems to be identifying wetland areas, Biddle said.

Area Schools Honored for Environmentally Sound Practices

WTRF.COM CHARLESTON - Hilltop Elementary in Marshall County is one of four schools nominated to be considered for the U.S. Green Ribbon School Award honoring sound environmental practices. The other schools are Musselman High School in Berkeley County; Wyoming County Career and Technical Center; and Our Lady of Fatima Parish School in Cabell County. Four schools also were named inaugural West Virginia Sustainable Schools for their efforts. Winners will be announced April 23 and honored at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., on June 4. ... "West Virginia schools are making great strides toward creating healthy environments in schools, including some that have become **Energy Star** schools for their conservation efforts" said state Superintendent of Schools Jorea Marple. "We want to recognize schools that strengthen that work by imbedding sustainability practices into all aspects of school life." Both the federal and state programs recognize schools that exemplify a commitment to

sustainable practices in their facilities. They also have worked to integrate those practices into the curriculum and helped build healthy and sustainable communities. All schools must meet rigorous standards in three criteria: environmental and sustainability education; healthy school environments; and environmental impact and energy efficiency of facilities.

EPA recognizes the borough of state college for curbside food recycling

ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERT(yesterday) STATE COLLEGE, Pa. -- Today the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency marked the beginning of Earth Week by recognizing State College Borough for its curbside food recycling program. State College is the only town in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that is conducting curbside food waste collection for composting. The program began as a pilot and is slated to go borough-wide in 2013. During the ceremony today at State College's composting facility, EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin also welcomed the borough and Centre County Recycling and Refuse Authority as the newest members to join EPA's Food Recovery Challenge. "Earth Week is an excellent time to raise awareness about the importance of recycling food waste. By diverting food waste away from landfills, the borough is saving money on disposal fees, reducing harmful air emissions and producing a valuable soil product when it is composted. EPA is pleased to recognize State College Borough and Centre County and welcome them into our Food Recovery Challenge," said EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin.

Pac-12 Wins EPA College Green Power Challenge

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADER The Pac-12 college athletic conference has claimed top spot among the 30 conferences in the EPA's College and University Green Power Challenge, which rewards the conference that buys the most green power in a year. ... **The University of Pennsylvania** – part of the Ivy League – continues to be the top individual school in the challenge, beating out 72 other schools by buying over 200 million kWh of green power, or 48 percent of its power purchases. In other inter-collegiate news, **American University in Washington D.C.** was this week named "Grand Champion" of the 2012 RecycleMania Tournament. American won the eight-week tourney, which aims to increase recycling rates at college campuses nationwide, for recycling a higher percentage of its total waste than any of the other 604 colleges involved in the challenge. American was also named one of 16 colleges to gain the highest score in The Princeton Review's Guide to 322 Green Colleges. Other universities named among the top 16 include Oregon State, **Virginia Tech** and Harvard. The Princeton Review does not release individual scores for the colleges in the guide – other than for those scoring top marks. For a full list of the 16 top schools, [click here](#).

***** MORNING HOT LIST *****

Chesapeake Bay gets D+ in new report card

RICHMOND TIMES DISPATCH Heavy rains and a hot summer harmed the Chesapeake Bay's health last year, earning it the second-worst grade on a yearly report card issued Tuesday by the University of Maryland's Center for Environmental Science. The center gave the bay a D+ in 2011, scoring only slightly better than in 2003, the worst year for bay health since the assessments began in 1986. Heavy spring and fall rains washed pollutants and sediments into the bay, and a hot, dry summer spurred algae blooms that lower oxygen levels. Flood waters from Tropical Storm Lee brought up to an inch and a half of sediment into the upper bay. Water clarity, meanwhile, continued to decline along with losses in bay grasses. Only two regions - the lower western shore of the bay, which got a C, and the Patapsco River in Maryland and Back River in Virginia - improved but still got D-. The rest declined or remained the same. Virginia's Rappahannock River, for example, went from a C- to a D+ as grasses suffered significant declines. The Potomac River remained at a D, suffering declines in water quality but not enough to change its grade. The Patuxent and Elizabeth rivers received failing grades. The failing grade was the first for the Elizabeth, which has been polluted by industry and shipyards, and scored a grade of zero for three

indicators. Last spring, the bay got 42 out of 100 possible points, down from 46 the year before and the first drop in four years. Rains carry sediments that can cloud water and bury bay grasses as well as pollutants such as nitrogen and phosphorus that can lead to oxygen-robbing algae blooms. Last year, heavy spring flows and two fall storms "brought a huge amount" of pollution and sediment into the bay, said Caroline Wicks, a UMCES project manager who presented the results. The weather this year has been cooperating so far with dry weather that hasn't washed much pollution into the bay, Wicks said. "Hopefully, that means we'll have better scores this coming summer. However, with the warmer air temperatures we might have another hot, dry summer," Wicks said. Nicholas DiPasquale, director of the federal Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Program, said the bay had received what he considered a failing grade in the report card but also noted the report card "gives a snapshot in time." "We also have to look at the long-term and we see a lot of positive indicators," DiPasquale said.

Gas industry wants a say in shale lawsuit

PITTSBURGH POST GAZETTE HARRISBURG -- A Commonwealth Court judge said he hopes to rule by Monday on whether the gas-drilling industry and top Republican legislators should be permitted to intervene in a lawsuit challenging the state's new Marcellus Shale law. Senior Judge Keith Quigley heard arguments on Tuesday from attorneys for both the industry and lawmakers, and opposition from lawyers for the municipal officials who say the law, known as Act 13, is unconstitutional. Local officials from seven towns, along with a Monroeville doctor and members of the Delaware Riverkeepers Network, are suing the state over the shale drilling law, which they say hinders their ability to adequately protect residents by restricting how they craft zoning rules for gas drilling. Hours after last week's initial hearing on the suit, the challengers won a small victory when Judge Quigley granted a 120-day stay to the portion of the law pertaining to local zoning rules. The remainder of the law went into effect on Saturday. That set the stage for an eventual hearing on the case's broader arguments, where drilling companies and lawmakers say they have a right to participate. Drillers stand to lose a predictability and reliability in their business operations that the new law provides by standardizing local zoning rules, argued Walter Bunt, an attorney representing the Pennsylvania Independent Oil and Gas Association, the Marcellus Shale Coalition and several drilling companies. He pointed to the leases that have been acquired by companies and could be difficult to develop if they must continue to navigate a maze of local ordinances. "This is the most serious and most significant event that [the industry] will encounter with respect to the Marcellus and Utica shale," Mr. Bunt said of the lawsuit. "The key in any business, just like in life, is to be able to predict what's going to happen. That business plan is placed into jeopardy by the Act 13 challenge."

Editorial: Data as murky as bad water

SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE The United States long ago bailed out of the effort to convert to the metric system. So the prospect of most Americans deciphering the meaning of a concentration measured in milligrams per liter is somewhat remote. Safety standards for levels of a wide array of substances in drinking water are measured in ways that make sense to scientists and lab technicians - parts per million, milligrams per liter and so on - but require translation for the folks to whom the data matter most: people who use the water. Yet, as reported recently by Laura Legere of The Times-Tribune, state analyses of drinking water samples from properties near Marcellus Shale gas-drilling sites have been provided to property owners mostly in the form of raw data. Most of them don't know, and can't be expected to know, what the data mean. A Penn State University study, for example, found that 75 percent of surveyed residents said their water test reports were somewhat or very difficult to understand. A state spokesman said the Department of Environmental Protection is not required by law to notify residents of contaminants it finds in their water supplies when it sends copies of lab reports, as opposed to when it detects a specific cause of contamination. Statutory requirements are minimums, however, not the sum and substance of what a state agency may do to serve the public. The vast expansion of gas drilling across the Marcellus Shale is a relatively new phenomenon that further renders the statutory rule a mere minimum requirement. The vast expansion of concern over the drilling explosion's impact on water should produce an equal expansion in the state government's efforts to inform affected residents of laboratory findings, regardless of the minimum statutory requirement. In several of the cases noted by Ms. Legere, for example, the lab results showed high levels of

methane and barium, but no explanation of those results or the dangers that the substances could pose. The DEP shouldn't wait for state law to include plain-English explanations of laboratory results that it provides to residents. It should inform them of the raw data, the safe level for each substance and the potential harms posed by elevated levels of those substances.

Obama and Romney on energy, environmental issues

ASSOCIATED PRESS WASHINGTON - A look at where President Barack Obama and Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney stand on energy and environmental issues:

OBAMA: Ordered temporary moratorium on deep-water drilling after the massive BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico but has pushed for more oil and gas drilling overall. Approved drilling plan in Arctic Ocean opposed by environmentalists. Now proposes that Congress give oil market regulators more power to control price manipulation by speculators and stiffer fines for doing so. Achieved historic increases in fuel economy standards for automobiles that will save money at the pump while raising the cost of new vehicles. Achieved first-ever regulations on heat-trapping gases blamed for global warming and on toxic mercury pollution from power plants. Spent heavily on green energy and has embraced nuclear power as a clean source. Failed to persuade a Democratic Congress to pass limits he promised on carbon emissions. Shelved plan to toughen health standards on lung-damaging smog. Rejected Keystone XL oil pipeline from Canada because of environmental concerns but supports fast-track approval of a segment of it. Proposes ending subsidies to oil industry but has failed to persuade Congress to do so.

ROMNEY: Supports opening the Atlantic and Pacific outer continental shelves to drilling, as well as Western lands, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and offshore Alaska; and supports exploitation of shale oil deposits. Wants to reduce obstacles to coal, natural gas and nuclear energy development, and accelerate drilling permits in areas where exploration has already been approved for developers with good safety records. Says green power has yet to become viable and the causes of climate change are unknown. Proposes to remove carbon dioxide from list of pollutants controlled by Clean Air Act and amend clean water and air laws to ensure the cost of complying with regulations is balanced against environmental benefit. Says cap and trade would "rocket energy prices." Blames high gas prices on Obama's decisions to limit oil drilling in environmentally sensitive areas and on overzealous regulation.

Susquehanna River and its tributaries hit drought levels

HARRISBURG PATRIOT-NEWS After the wettest year on record, Pennsylvania is barreling toward record drought conditions. The Susquehanna River is "at levels that haven't been seen since 1910 and 1946, both severe drought years," said Susan Obleski, a spokeswoman at the Susquehanna River Basin Commission. The state has not officially declared a drought, but the main stem of the river and many tributaries are at or near record lows for this time of year. Obleski cited a U.S. Geological Survey analysis that shows stream flows at hydrological emergency levels in 42 of the state's 67 counties as of Monday. Another 10 counties are at warning levels, and another 12 at watch level. Only three are normal or above. Groundwater levels are at emergency levels in 13 counties. The SRBC, which regulates water withdrawals from the river, has been issuing temporary orders to cease since February, said Obleski. She said 10 were issued on Monday morning alone, and more are in the pipeline. "The numbers are mounting daily," she said.

Coal mine water considered for frac fluids

WEST VIRGINIA STATE JOURNAL Water leaking from coal mines into nearby waterways and too much freshwater being pulled from waterways may have a common solution. A new report from the RAND corporation concludes water from coal mines is plentiful and technically feasible for fracturing, though quality is a concern. The report is the proceedings of a December roundtable conference on the "Feasibility and Challenges of Using Acid Mine Drainage for Marcellus Shale Natural Gas Extraction." The report largely focuses on Pennsylvania and is [available free online](#). Water that drains from abandoned or actively managed mines is often

acidic and is sometimes drained into local streams. Representatives of industry, academics and government met to discuss the possibility of using the coal mine water for fracturing shale, a process that releases large quantities of natural gas. Plenty of challenges exist. The salinity, chemical composition and other properties of coal mine water can vary substantially. Hydraulic fracturing solutions are often complex and even proprietary. "Professor Radisav Vidic of the University of Pittsburgh discussed the ranges of chemical composition, such as acidity and solute concentrations, that might be acceptable for hydraulic fracturing, stressing that current guidelines are not based on rigorous research," the paper states. "He suggested that a wide range of concentrations of many chemicals may be acceptable for use in hydraulic fracturing operations. This is because chemical treatments and a combination of CMD and fresh or flowback water can be used to adjust the chemical properties of the water used for hydraulic fracturing." The cost of using coal mine water for hydraulic fracturing was discussed at the roundtable, but an accurate estimate proved elusive. "It is clear, however, that the costs of using CMD will be very site-specific. In some cases, using CMD may be less expensive than using fresh water; in other cases, it will be more costly," the report states. "This is due to transport and storage costs and (often more importantly) to the fact that the extent of treatment required will depend both on the starting quality of the CMD source and the specifications of the final type of water desired by the operator at the extraction site." The idea of using water from coal mines that could otherwise present an environmental problem would also reduce the amount of freshwater used by Marcellus shale drillers.

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

From Early Bird Camden County project to expand sewage service could spur construction (NJ) Construction is set to begin on a \$50 million project to expand sewage service in undeveloped sections of eastern Camden County, including portions of the Pinelands, laying the groundwork for 10,000 new homes. The county plan - paid for with a low-interest loan from a state environmental fund - comes as the region wrestles with tight municipal budgets caused by the real estate slowdown and shrinking property values. "That part of Camden County that has remained stagnant because of water and sewer issues," said Camden County Freeholder Jeff Nash. "Hopefully, the economy is going to substantially turn around in the next few years, so this is the best time to rebuild the infrastructure."

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

From Early Bird Gas industry wants a say in shale lawsuit HARRISBURG -- A Commonwealth Court judge said he hopes to rule by Monday on whether the gas-drilling industry and top Republican legislators should be permitted to intervene in a lawsuit challenging the state's new Marcellus Shale law. Senior Judge Keith Quigley heard arguments on Tuesday from attorneys for both the industry and lawmakers, and opposition from lawyers for the municipal officials who say the law, known as Act 13, is unconstitutional. Local officials from seven towns, along with a Monroeville doctor and members of the Delaware Riverkeepers Network, are suing the state over the shale drilling law, which they say hinders their ability to adequately protect residents by restricting how they craft zoning rules for gas drilling. Hours after last week's initial hearing on the suit, the challengers won a small victory when Judge Quigley granted a 120-day stay to the portion of the law pertaining to local zoning rules. The remainder of the law went into effect on Saturday. That set the stage for an eventual hearing on the case's broader arguments, where drilling companies and lawmakers say they have a right to participate. Drillers stand to lose a predictability and reliability in their business operations that the new law provides by standardizing local zoning rules, argued Walter Bunt, an attorney representing the Pennsylvania Independent Oil and Gas Association, the Marcellus Shale Coalition and several drilling companies. He pointed to the leases that have been acquired by companies and could be difficult to develop if they must continue to navigate a maze of local ordinances. "This is the most serious and most significant event that [the industry] will encounter with respect to the Marcellus and Utica shale," Mr. Bunt

said of the lawsuit. "The key in any business, just like in life, is to be able to predict what's going to happen. That business plan is placed into jeopardy by the Act 13 challenge."

From Early Bird Downtown catching eyes of energy firms As venerable U.S. Steel contemplates a move out of Downtown, some of the region's newer corporate players in the oil and gas industry might be looking to do the exact opposite. While most oil and gas interests have settled in the suburbs, some may now be casting an eye to the Golden Triangle as space in places like Cranberry and Southpointe gets tighter and tighter. One major corporation, Chevron, is said to be considering Downtown in its search for more than 140,000 square feet of space to consolidate and expand its operations in the region. Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald said he has heard that Chevron and two other major energy companies, Shell Oil Co. and Exxon, are interested in space Downtown as well as in the suburbs. "I think that bodes well for this region that there is competition for these sites. That's something we didn't have a few years ago, and that's a good problem to have," he said. Likewise, Mark Popovich, senior managing director of the Pittsburgh office of Holliday Fenoglio Fowler LP, a commercial real estate brokerage, said he has heard talk Chevron and Shell could be looking for space Downtown. "I don't know if we're hearing wishful thinking or speculative thinking, or if there's something real behind it," he said. California-based Chevron established operations in the region in February 2011 after paying \$4.3 billion to acquire Moon natural gas producer Atlas Energy, which was active in tapping Marcellus Shale deposits. The company currently occupies about 140,000 square feet in Moon, including 60,000 at the Cherrington office park. Chevron is no stranger to Pittsburgh. In 1984, it acquired Gulf Oil, which operated its headquarters from the Gulf Building, Downtown. Tim Goetz, a principal in Grant Street Associates, the real estate firm representing Chevron, wouldn't comment on whether the energy giant was considering a move Downtown.

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PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW

From Early Bird Overflow plans stymie deal at Latrobe plant The Latrobe Municipal Authority members on Tuesday were told they will have to wait until its engineers meet with the Unity Township Municipal Authority engineers before they learn whether significant differences in the two competing sewage treatment plans can be resolved. Gibson-Thomas Engineering Co. of Latrobe, which represents Latrobe's sewage authority, intends to meet with Lennon Smith Souleret Engineering Inc. of Coraopolis, the Unity Township sewage authority's engineer, to discuss the differences in the two Act 537 plan to control sewage overflow at Latrobe's treatment plant, Ken Orie, a Gibson-Thomas engineer, told the Latrobe authority members. No date has been set for the meeting, but Latrobe authority members discussed the need for a facilitator at the meeting. Representatives from the two engineering firms clashed last month over the dueling plans at a Unity Township Municipal Authority meeting. Orie said there are "two or three sticking points" with the Unity Township Municipal Authority over the plans, including the use of different historical stormwater flows.

From Early Bird Earth Week kicks off with awards, plantings The Fayette County Buy Local Network kicked off Earth Week on Monday afternoon with awards, tree planting and landscape work at Highlands Hospital.

From Early Bird Natural gas pipeline project outlined in Parks Officials with the company planning to build a \$150 million natural gas pipeline that cuts through the northern section of the township said they will work to reach a happy medium with residents who own property affected by the project. NiSource Gas Transmission and Storage

has partnered with Texas-based XTO Energy to construct the 70-mile line, which will serve as a gathering system for Marcellus shale wells in Allegheny, Armstrong, Butler, Indiana and Westmoreland counties. As part of the project, NiSource plans to replace the 55-mile, 10-inch Buckeye pipeline, a portion of which runs across the northern tier of the township. About 150 properties along the entire length of the old line will be affected. Denise Richter, NiSource operations manager, couldn't immediately say how many township properties will be affected. But she said the company intends to work with property owners to reach an agreement both sides can live with. There have been instances in its rights of way acquisition process elsewhere in which the company paid a property owner to move a building and tweaked its design plan so the line didn't disturb an existing structure, Richter said. The company will use the existing right of way for the old Buckeye line, which Richter said is 50 feet wide. "Is it possible that buildings have been constructed close to that line?" Supervisor Paul R. Duriancik asked.

From Early Bird Waterline project nearly finished, another to start in Springdale Springdale officials hope to wrap up a waterline project and prepare for traffic congestion with the addition of a storm waterline in June. The project is expected to take 10 to 12 weeks as workers install storm waterlines under Butler Street from the railroad tracks down to the Allegheny River. Councilman John Molnar said he's made provisions for part-time police officers to direct traffic every day during the course of the project to help ease congestion. He said they will be paid an increased rate of \$22 an hour. The \$800,000 project will be funded through a PennVEST loan, which the borough will pay back over 20 to 25 years at an interest rate of about 1.5 percent.

HARRISBURGH PATRIOT NEWS

From Early Bird Susquehanna River and its tributaries hit drought levels After the wettest year on record, Pennsylvania is barreling toward record drought conditions. The Susquehanna River is "at levels that haven't been seen since 1910 and 1946, both severe drought years," said Susan Obleski, a spokeswoman at the Susquehanna River Basin Commission. The state has not officially declared a drought, but the main stem of the river and many tributaries are at or near record lows for this time of year. Obleski cited a U.S. Geological Survey analysis that shows stream flows at hydrological emergency levels in 42 of the state's 67 counties as of Monday. Another 10 counties are at warning levels, and another 12 at watch level. Only three are normal or above. Groundwater levels are at emergency levels in 13 counties. The SRBC, which regulates water withdrawals from the river, has been issuing temporary orders to cease since February, said Obleski. She said 10 were issued on Monday morning alone, and more are in the pipeline. "The numbers are mounting daily," she said.

From Early Bird Harrisburg gets state recycling grant The state Department of Environmental Protection awarded the city the grant for recycling 8,530 tons of residential and commercial materials in 2010, according to Mayor Linda Thompson's office. The city should receive the funding in a few weeks, Thompson's office said. It's unclear what Harrisburg will use the grant for and Thompson's spokesman, Robert Philbin, could not immediately be reached for comment.

From Early Bird Dauphin County Recycling Center to host open house on Saturday HARRISBURG — Dauphin County Commissioners and the county's Waste Management and Recycling Department will host an open house at the Dauphin County Recycling Center from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday at 1620 South 19th Street. "As you do your spring cleaning and get rid of old or unwanted electronics and appliances, please make a conscious effort to reuse and recycle," said Commissioner Mike Pries. "By safely disposing of your recyclables, you can do your part in keeping our county clean and green." The facility accepts unwanted electronics and appliances, such as refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners, dehumidifiers, dishwashers, dryers, stoves, water heaters and washers, that function by electric or gas current.

SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE

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Residents question safety, oversight at meeting about natural gas compressor station explosion MONTROSE - State regulators and natural gas company officials faced nearly two hours of questions from residents about safety, air pollution and eroded public confidence during a briefing Tuesday night at Montrose Area High School about a recent natural gas compressor station explosion. Officials with the state Department of Environmental Protection and Williams, the company that owns the compressor station, sought to fill in gaps in the public understanding of the explosion and fire at the Lathrop station on March 29 and reassure citizens that the operations are safe.

STATE COLLEGE CENTRE DAILY TIMES

From Early Bird Volunteers to clean creeks Those looking to improve the area's waterways can participate in two events this weekend sponsored by the Penns Valley Conservation Association. Volunteers will scour the banks of several local creeks from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday for the group's annual Stream Bank Cleanup. Anyone interested should arrive at 9 a.m. at Coburn Park, about three miles south of Millheim, for cleanup assignments. Gloves, bags and vests will be provided. The association sponsors the cleanup each spring along the banks of Pine, Penns, Elk and Sinking creeks. According to the group's website, volunteers typically find enough trash to fill a 20-yard Dumpster. Prizes are awarded for the most unusual finds and for the most bags collected. Volunteers are asked to bring a potluck dish.

ERIE TIMES-NEWS

From Early Bird Controversy abounds over new Pennsylvania drilling law Natural gas drilling near homes, wastewater pits near schools, and pipelines running through parks are all allowed under the controversial Marcellus Shale drilling law that took effect Monday. Communities will have little control over such operations, opponents say, because the Pennsylvania law trumps local ordinances that limit where wells can be put. Proponents say Act 13 ensures that drillers get equal treatment; opponents say it provides them with special treatment. The provision of the law that supersedes local zoning laws "is an assault on an important democratic principal -- the right to self governing," says Karl Schwartz, director of the Gallows Run Watershed Association. "The law takes away zoning from everyone completely -- every township, borough, and citizen in Bucks County" and across the state, Nockamixon Township Supervisor Nancy Alessi said. Act 13 was enacted to collect impact fees from drilling companies tapping the vast gas supplies in the Marcellus Shale region. "Towns where there is drilling are thrilled by this windfall -- it's like manna from heaven," Morrisville Borough Councilwoman Nancy Sherlock said in a recent interview. "But the impact on waterways and the environment is long-term and statewide. I have a strong sense they are going to be harmed" by the law. The law is aimed at "unconventional drilling" in the Marcellus Shale, which lies beneath most of northern and western Pennsylvania. It was never meant to cover drilling outside the Marcellus region, State Rep. Brian Ellis (R., Butler), a cosponsor of the bill that passed along party lines, told an audience during a recent informational session about the law at Palisades High School.

From Early Bird Pleasant Ridge Manor officials ready to explore water service project Pleasant Ridge Manor officials are ready to start serious talks with the Fairview Township Sewer and Water Authorities about extending municipal water service to Pleasant Ridge Manor-West. Erie County Council, acting as the nursing home's board of trustees this evening, gave Pleasant Ridge's chief executive, Robert Smith, the go-ahead to start exploring the project. Mark Corey, an engineer who works with the Fairview Township Sewer and Water Authorities, told County Council and Pleasant Ridge officials in March that it would likely cost the county about \$400,000 to extend water service to the 312-bed Pleasant Ridge Manor-West, 8300 West Ridge Road in Fairview Township. It would cost about \$1 million to extend municipal sewer service to the nursing home, Corey said previously.

ABINGTON JOURNAL

From Early Bird Pilot study ongoing Waverly tests sewage treatment lagoon filter. WAVERLY TWP. - Waverly Township is currently conducting a 12-month pilot study to determine if a secondary sewage treatment system will help maintain nitrification during cold weather. The system is augmenting the lagoons with a biologically active filter (BAF) in order to maintain nitrification throughout the winter months. The township of Waverly has been operating two lagoons in series since 1986, but as a result of the Chesapeake Bay initiative to clean up the waters that flow to the Bay, the township is obligated to develop plans to meet the new discharge requirements as well as address current discharge parameters by the end of 2013. According to township manager Bill White, lagoon systems are typically inexpensive to operate and do not involve a lot of problems associated with activated sludge systems. Waverly's system involves two lagoons that have tubes running through them constantly blowing oxygen to digest the waste. "It creates the development of aerobic bacteria that will digest the wastes," White said. "It does a very efficient job during warm weather, but one of the problems that exist with aerobic systems is that they don't do a good job getting rid of the ammonia/nitrogen if the water gets cold. The water temperature has to be above 45 to 50 degrees for the bacteria to work effectively. Therefore, we end up with higher amounts of nitrogen and ammonia in the effluent, or what we're discharging into the stream, during the winter

months.”

POCONO RECORD

\$2M hazmat dump cleanup in Pocono Township discussed today Pocono Township officials will meet with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection today to discuss the planned cleanup of a dump site. The township and the state agency will meet at 8:30 a.m. at the township municipal building on Route 611 in Tannersville. The meeting is open to the public. The meeting is to discuss how the state agency will go about clearing and neutralizing the hazardous materials seeping into Dry Sawmill Run from the Yuhas property along Sullivan Trail. The cleanup is expected to cost about \$2 million and start this summer, township officials said. The site has long been a problem area. It's an abandoned property, and there has been large-scale dumping at the site over the years. The site is known as the Yuhas property, though it has changed hands since Dennis Yuhas died in 2003. The property, near the Tobyhanna Township line, had been used for the disposal of about 33,000 cubic yards of construction and demolition waste and possibly contaminated soil in the 1990s, according to the state.

WASHINGTON OBSERVER-REPORTER

Author warns of fracking effects Diagnosed with cancer at age 20, Dr. Sandra Steingraber's life work would become studying the connection between environmental toxins and cancer. Today, the New York ecologist and author says she has never seen a bigger, emerging public health threat than that from hydraulic fracturing used in natural gas drilling. "We look across the border at Pennsylvania and say that's not the future we want for us," she said. Steingraber will speak at Washington & Jefferson College next week. Her talk will be given at Olin Fine Arts at 7 p.m. April 24.

UNIONTOWN HERALD-STANDARD

DEP citing company for contaminating Greene County creek

A company constructing a natural gas pipeline in Greene County is facing a state citation for allegedly allowing 500 gallons of bentonite drilling mud to escape from a bore hole into a tributary of Dunkard Creek. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) said it will issue a notice of violation to Equitrans for the "mess" in Garrison Fork, a small tributary in Gilmore Township, said DEP spokesman John Poister. About 500 gallons of a mixture of bentonite, a non-toxic clay-like substance used in drilling, and water flowed out of a hole being drilled under Garrison Fork and entered the creek on April 11, Poister said. Equitrans was in the process of drilling a 2,800 foot hole under the creek for a 24-inch pipeline when the "inadvertent return of drilling mud" occurred, he said.

DELAWARE COUNTY DAILY TIMES

Delta close to refinery deal for ConocoPhillips plant in Trainer? A deal for the ConocoPhillips' Trainer refinery may be imminent, according to various industry and media reports. CNBC reports that Delta Air Lines might close a deal on the Delaware County facility as early as this week, for between \$100 million and \$125 million. Delta officials declined to comment. Tom Kloza of the Oil Price Information Service reported that Delta is the front runner to purchase the 185,000 barrel-per-day facility, although other bidders such as the Waltham, Mass.-based Global Partners, have expressed interest.

WILKES-BARRE CITIENS' VOICE

Proposed Senate bill addresses Marcellus law impact on doctors HARRISBURG - Legislation to address a controversy over doctors' access to trade secret information under Pennsylvania's new Marcellus Shale drilling impact fee law is being drafted by a Democratic senator. The measure by state Sen. Daylin Leach, D-King of Prussia, is in response to a little-noticed requirement that doctors sign a confidentiality agreement in return for access to proprietary information on chemicals used in the hydrofracturing process. Leach proposes to remove the confidentiality clause for health care professionals who can demonstrate the information is necessary to treatment or diagnosis of a patient. He also wants a more comprehensive definition in law of the "medical necessity" exemption under which drillers must immediately provide requested information to a physician who can show those details are relevant to diagnosis or treatment. The Pennsylvania Medical Society raised questions earlier this month

about the impact of confidentiality clause on patient-physician communication.

CANON-MCMILLANPATCH

MSC Supports RAND Conclusions on Use of Mine Water in Hydraulic Fracturing Marcellus Shale Coalition President Kathryn Z. Klaber on Tuesday highlighted conclusions released this week by the RAND Corporation in support of the use of coal mine water in hydraulic fracturing operations in the Marcellus Shale and other regional shale plays in the Appalachian Basin. The MSC is headquartered in Southpointe. The MSC-commissioned RAND report follows a roundtable hosted by RAND in late 2011, at which researchers, hydraulic fracturing operators, industry representatives, the Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, legal experts, and regulatory representatives from Pennsylvania and neighboring states addressed the feasibility of using mine water for drilling and hydraulic fracturing of shale gas wells. Klaber issued the following statement on the study's conclusions:

ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERT

EPA recognizes the borough of state college for curbside food recycling (yesterday) STATE COLLEGE, Pa. -- Today the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency marked the beginning of Earth Week by recognizing State College Borough for its curbside food recycling program. State College is the only town in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that is conducting curbside food waste collection for composting. The program began as a pilot and is slated to go borough-wide in 2013. During the ceremony today at State College's composting facility, EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin also welcomed the borough and Centre County Recycling and Refuse Authority as the newest members to join EPA's Food Recovery Challenge. "Earth Week is an excellent time to raise awareness about the importance of recycling food waste. By diverting food waste away from landfills, the borough is saving money on disposal fees, reducing harmful air emissions and producing a valuable soil product when it is composted. EPA is pleased to recognize State College Borough and Centre County and welcome them into our Food Recovery Challenge," said EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin.

WBNG.COM (NY)

Neighbors Question DEP and Williams Bridgewater Township, PA (WBNG Binghamton) Neighbors gather to learn more about an explosion that tore through a natural gas compressor station in Susquehanna County late last month. More than a hundred of them got together at the Montrose Area High School auditorium. That's where members of Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection and Williams, the company that owns the compressor station, fielded questions.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WAMU-RADIO (NPR)

From Early Bird Chesapeake Grade Heavy rains and a hot summer harmed the health of the Chesapeake Bay last year. The University of Maryland's Center for Environmental Science gives a report card on the bay's health every year, and for 2011 it got an abysmal D+, down from C- last year. The grade was the second-worst earned since grades were first handed out in 1986. The worst year was 2003. Pollution and sediment poured into the bay from wastewater plants, urban storm sewers, and agricultural fields from Virginia to New York. But that happens every year. The difference last year was a super wet spring that flushed a lot more of that stuff into the water. Then a hot dry summer cooked up algae blooms that feed on that pollution and lower oxygen levels. Numerically, the Chesapeake Bay was given a score of 42 out of 100, down from 46 the year before. It was the first drop in four years. As for this year, it's not clear how the bay will do. It's certainly warmer, which affects wildlife, but it's also been dry so far, which means less bad stuff is washing into the bay.

THE HILL (BLOG)

Obama campaign 'honored' to have green groups' endorsement

The manager of President Obama's reelection campaign welcomed **endorsements from several big environmental groups** on Wednesday. "We're honored to have the support of the Sierra Club, the League of Conservation Voters, and Clean Water Action and Environment America, and we look forward to working with them throughout the campaign," campaign manager Jim Messina said in a statement. The groups are strongly supporting Obama despite some divisions between environmentalists and the White House. Messina used the occasion to tout Obama's environmental record in a way that emphasized the economy, which is shaping up as the top issue in the 2012 campaign. "President Obama is fighting for an economy that's built to last, and that's why he's investing in clean energy and responsibly developing our natural resources in a way that creates good jobs here in America, protects the environment, and reduces our dependence on foreign oil," Messina said.

DELAWARE

DELAWARE CAPE GAZETTE

From Early Bird CIB rain barrels on sale The Center for the Inland Bays wants to stop rain runoff into the Inland Bays one barrel at a time. Its annual rain barrel sale is designed to help stem the flow of pollution into local waterways, and the center is currently taking orders. The 55-gallon barrels are made of black plastic with holes bored for a spigot at the bottom and a drainpipe for roof runoff at the top. They cost \$30 apiece. "We sold 88 last year, and it would be nice to sell more than that this year," said Sally Boswell, education and outreach coordinator for CIB. The center encourages residents to reduce runoff into the Inland Bays, and installing a rain barrel is one way to do it, Boswell said. "It captures water that otherwise would flow down the roadways and would bring pollutants into the waterways," she said. Runoff gathers gas, oil, fertilizer, pesticides, pet waste and other substances that threaten water quality when it reaches the Inland Bays, she said. Planting a rain garden is another way to help reduce runoff water into the waterways, she said. Soaker hoses designed specifically for rain barrels can be attached to the rain barrel spigot to water a garden or yard, she said. Barrels also can be painted for a more decorative look. Boswell said the center is taking orders until Saturday, April 28, and will deliver the rain barrels to the Native Plant Sale being held Saturday, May 5, at the James Farm in Ocean View. For more information on ordering, visit www.inlandbays.org.

From Early Bird Rehoboth to protect lakes Planners take public input on new ordinance. Rehoboth Beach — The Rehoboth Beach Planning Commission dipped its toes into troubled waters as it considered new ordinances regulating building near the city's lakes. In reaction to the controversy surrounding the house under construction at Lot 6 Silver Lane on the edge of Silver Lake, the city commissioners have tasked the commission to come up with the new ordinances, which could include measures such as buffer zones and changes to setback requirements to better protect the lakes. The city commissioners are set to hold a public hearing on a moratorium on new construction within 15 feet around the lake. The moratorium would preserve the status quo to allow the planners to craft new regulations. The idea of a buffer zone around the lakes was included in the 2004 and 2010 comprehensive development plans, but nothing has been enacted. Chairman Preston Littleton said the commission would not focus on the Silver Lane property and was seeking to have a more generic discussion. Jennifer Volk, an environmental scientist with the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, opened the April 13 meeting explaining how buffers trap pollutants and take up nutrients that can otherwise seep into the lakes. Other benefits of buffers, she said, are flood mitigation, habitat for wildlife and stabilization of the banks.

From Early Bird Debate over drainage problems continues Georgetown — Without a serious look at drainage issues in Sussex County, the same problems that occurred during the wet period in 2009 and 2010 could be repeated. That is the message Sussex Conservation District officials have been trying to get across to Sussex County Council. District officials took county officials on a tour of problem areas and have made two presentations to council over the past two months in an effort to get out the word on potential problems. Sussex County stands alone in Delaware with no drainage ordinance and no single-family lot- grading regulations. “With no regulations and no enforcement, we can't force builders to comply,” said Jessica Watson, manager of the Sussex Conservation District's sediment and stormwater program, during a March 20 presentation to county council. Watson said common issues include homes being built below road levels and in low areas where water collects. She said many drainage problems could be avoided and would be less costly to fix with pre-planning. She also said in some cases, there are no solutions to fix existing drainage problems. Since 2007, the conservation district has received more than 1,000 calls about drainage concerns. That equates to one drainage concern for 122 houses. Councilwoman Joan Deaver, D-Rehoboth Beach, said builders can construct homes and homeowners can fill in material or turn their downspouts to drain water onto neighboring properties – but neighbors have little recourse.

DNREC seeks to create nontidal wetland program Marshes disappearing faster than replenished. Forty years after the Clean Water Act offered protection for wetlands, Delaware continues to lose them at an increasing rate. Nontidal wetlands disappear primarily because of housing developments and agriculture. Delaware has no management program to protect nontidal wetlands, instead leaving their protection and delineation to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. To assess the loss wetlands, Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control compared aerial maps shot in 1992 and in 2007 to determine where wetlands have been lost. During the 15-year span, scientists found, Delaware lost more than 3,000 acres of vegetated wetlands. This is a 10 percent annual increase over losses prior to 1992, said Mark Biddle, environmental scientist with DNREC's watershed assessment section. The primary problem seems to be identifying wetland areas, Biddle said.

Riverfront festival Celebrates Earth Day

Join the Delaware Nature Society for a free Earth Day Festival! The family-oriented event, scheduled for 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday rain or shine, will take place at the DuPont Environmental Education Center at the Russell W. Peterson Urban Wildlife Refuge on the Wilmington Riverfront. Take a canoe trip down the Christina River, catch fish and aquatic insects with nets, and trek to a beaver lodge. In addition, enjoy storytelling, craft activities, exhibitors, live music and more. The Earth Day Festival is being held in partnership with the Riverfront Development Corp. and ING Direct. Details: 656-1490 or www.delaware.naturesociety.org/earthday.html.

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

From Early Bird Blog: Bullpush Mountain, public health and EPA attacks It's been a long time since I wrote about Bullpush Mountain, when the Gazette exposed major flaws (which continue today) in the permitting of mountaintop removal operations in West Virginia.

From Early Bird Kanawha recycling center to reopen, with limits CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Kanawha County Solid Waste Authority board members are still looking for a new home for a countywide recycling plant, after they were unable to buy a Dunbar site and took no action Tuesday on another possible site north of Charleston. Board members also tabled plans to build a steel building for processing recyclables at their Slack Street location when problems arose on bids for the project. But the Slack Street center will reopen Monday for public drop-offs -- on a limited scale -- as announced last month, Director Norm Steenstra said at the board's monthly meeting Tuesday.

"We're running newspaper ads on Earth Day [Sunday]. We've ordered signs. So at 7 o'clock Monday morning ... we'll have an attendant here and I'll be here to see how it goes," Steenstra said. Hours for the supervised public drop-off are 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays and 8 a.m. to noon Saturdays. The Slack Street center will be closed Sundays and holidays. Fewer items will be taken for recycling -- cardboard, mixed paper, office paper, No. 1 plastics (water and soda bottles), No. 2 plastics (milk jugs and detergent bottles), aluminum cans and steel cans. All items must be separated. "Of course we decided not to take glass," Steenstra said. "That's been the biggest disappointment. There's no place to take glass. "The operation is going to be open almost 60 hours a week. There's going to be some bumps in the road with this. But in talking to my friends, they're ecstatic this is going to reopen." The authority is apparently no closer to finding a new home for its processing operations after it voluntarily declared the previous Slack Street facility unsafe in early March.

WEST VIRGINIA STATE JOURNAL

From Early Bird Coal mine water considered for frac fluids Water leaking from coal mines into nearby waterways and too much freshwater being pulled from waterways may have a common solution. A new report from the RAND corporation concludes water from coal mines is plentiful and technically feasible for fracturing, though quality is a concern. The report is the proceedings of a December roundtable conference on the "Feasibility and Challenges of Using Acid Mine Drainage for Marcellus Shale Natural Gas Extraction." The report largely focuses on Pennsylvania and is [available free online](#). Water that drains from abandoned or actively managed mines is often acidic and is sometimes drained into local streams. Representatives of industry, academics and government met to discuss the possibility of using the coal mine water for fracturing shale, a process that releases large quantities of natural gas. Plenty of challenges exist. The salinity, chemical composition and other properties of coal mine water can vary substantially. Hydraulic fracturing solutions are often complex and even proprietary. "Professor Radisav Vidic of the University of Pittsburgh discussed the ranges of chemical composition, such as acidity and solute concentrations, that might be acceptable for hydraulic fracturing, stressing that current guidelines are not based on rigorous research," the paper states. "He suggested that a wide range of concentrations of many chemicals may be acceptable for use in hydraulic fracturing operations. This is because chemical treatments and a combination of CMD and fresh or flowback water can be used to adjust the chemical properties of the water used for hydraulic fracturing." The cost of using coal mine water for hydraulic fracturing was discussed at the roundtable, but an accurate estimate proved elusive. "It is clear, however, that the costs of using CMD will be very site-specific. In some cases, using CMD may be less expensive than using fresh water; in other cases, it will be more costly," the report states. "This is due to transport and storage costs and (often more importantly) to the fact that the extent of treatment required will depend both on the starting quality of the CMD source and the specifications of the final type of water desired by the operator at the extraction site." The idea of using water from coal mines that could otherwise present an environmental problem would also reduce the amount of freshwater used by Marcellus shale drillers.

BLUEFIELD DAILY TELEGRAPH

From Early Bird Bluefield scales back Clean Sweep BLUEFIELD — The city of Bluefield will be scaling back its spring cleaning efforts due to the rising cost of holding the annual Clean Sweep initiative. City Manager Andy Merriman said the city will be helping residents do some spring cleaning, but will not be collecting as much debris as in the past. This year, Merriman said city crews will only be picking up brush and yard debris. "We are working on a clean up event," Merriman said. "We are going to be doing it close to the end of the month. The difference is we will be doing a Clean Sweep only for yard waste. If God made it and you throw it out by the curb we will pick it. It is a deviation from what we have done in the past. The initial intent of Clean Sweep was to get fallen yard waste out of the way after the winter." The first Clean Sweep was held in 2005 as part of efforts to clean up the city. The first event picked up items including old furniture, appliances and other trash for free. The only items not picked up during the first Clean Sweep in 2005 were hazardous materials, construction and demolition debris, roofing, large tree trunks, dirt and rocks. In its first year, the city picked up 300 tons of debris, including 1,200 junk tires.

WEST VIRGINIA STATE PUBLIC BROADCASTING

From Early Bird Early spring a double-edged sword to local growers Sunday saw Charleston temperatures approach a record high 89 degrees set in 1994. The warmer weather has been kind to area farmers in one sense, but a mild winter hasn't made things easy. Charleston's Capitol Market is flush with fragrances from ferns to flowering plants as its spring season swings into things. The co-owner of Morris Plants of Oak Hill, Sue Morris, points to some pink primrose lining the center aisle at the market. The flowers have been in bloom for sometime and Morris said while that may appear good for business, it can be a double-edged sword for local growers like herself. "You do start to make a bit of income earlier in the season, but that can work against you because if you have a lot of people that shop and take things home and then it turns off really cold, it'll really set those plants back," Morris said. March saw 19 days where the high temperature was at least 10 degrees hotter than that day's average high mark. Half of April's days have hit that distinction as well. Anne Gritt of Gritt's Farms said the warm weather has been a boon for business. "It's been a very early season, it came quick and business has been good," Gritt said. "The warmer, brighter days, the crops grow faster; we can get them to market quicker. A rainy season can be devastating to growers; people don't buy flowers when it's raining."

ASSOCIATED PRESS (W. Va.)

From Early Bird Suit claims ex-W.Va. strip mine polluting streams (Tuesday) HUNTINGTON -- The owner of a reclaimed mountaintop removal mine site is being sued by environmental groups who claim untreated water discharges from the property are polluting streams. The Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and the Sierra Club filed the lawsuit Monday against Boone East Development Company in U.S. District Court in Huntington. According to the lawsuit, the reclaimed property near Cannelton in Fayette and Kanawha counties is discharging water containing high levels of selenium and other pollutants into tributaries of Smithers Creek, in violation of the Clean Water Act. The lawsuit seeks civil penalties of up to \$37,500 per day for each violation. It also asks the court to order Boone East Development to determine the environmental damage and remedy the contamination. A message left at a Mount Hope telephone listing for Boone East Development wasn't immediately returned Tuesday morning. The former Bullpush Mountain mine, opened in 1970 by Cannelton Industries, was West Virginia's first mountaintop removal mine, the lawsuit said. In 2005, the mine's state permit, covering 2,010 acres, was transferred to Jacks Branch Coal Company. Mining operations later ceased and the property was reclaimed. Boone East Development is the current owner, the lawsuit said.

From Early Bird WVU, Va. Tech cancel energy symposium MORGANTOWN, W.Va. -- West Virginia University and Virginia Tech have canceled a symposium intended to explore possible collaborations on energy issues. WVU attributes the cancellation to low registration. The university says faculty from both schools will continue to look for ways to collaborate on energy issues. The symposium had been set for April 25 at Pipestem State Park.

WTRF.COM

Area Schools Honored for Environmentally Sound Practices CHARLESTON - Hilltop Elementary in Marshall County is one of four schools nominated to be considered for the U.S. Green Ribbon School Award honoring sound environmental practices. The other schools are Musselman High School in Berkeley County; Wyoming County Career and Technical Center; and Our Lady of Fatima Parish School in Cabell County. Four schools also were named inaugural West Virginia Sustainable Schools for their efforts. Winners will be announced April 23 and honored at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., on June 4. ... "West Virginia schools are making great strides toward creating healthy environments in schools, including some that have become Energy Star schools for their conservation efforts" said state Superintendent of Schools Jorea Marple. "We want to recognize schools that strengthen that work by imbedding sustainability practices into all aspects of school life." Both the federal and state programs recognize schools that exemplify a commitment to sustainable practices in their facilities. They also have worked to integrate those practices into the curriculum and helped build healthy and sustainable communities. All schools must meet rigorous standards in three criteria: environmental and sustainability education; healthy school environments; and environmental impact and energy efficiency of facilities.

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

From Early Bird Meteorologists: Spike in tornadoes doesn't mean higher risk in Md. Destructive and devastating tornadoes have grabbed the weather headlines so far this year, with the 416 tornadoes observed through April 9 about one-fourth more than normal. But does the apparent spike in severe weather, also including hail and damaging thunderstorms, mean added risk for Maryland?

Judge awards whistleblower \$462,500 in high-seas pollution case

Low-level officer alerted Coast Guard to illegal dumping via 'magic pipe'. A federal judge in Baltimore has awarded \$462,500 to a low-level merchant officer who alerted Coast Guard inspectors that his cargo ship was intentionally polluting the high seas. In his ruling Monday, U.S. District Judge Marvin Garbis also left the door open to giving Salvador Lopez, a former ship's engineer from the Philippines, an additional \$462,500 in reward money, depending on the outcome of another portion of the case. Lopez gave Coast Guard inspectors in Baltimore a handwritten note tipping them off to the illegal dumping of oily waste and garbage during the M/V Aquarosa's first visit to the port of Baltimore, in February 2011. He turned over to inspectors copies of the ship's log and his cell phone containing more than 300 photos documenting the violations.

SALISBURY DAILY TIMES

From Early Bird Editorial: Rain, rain, where are you when we need you most? While you're enjoying the warm, sunny weather, keep in mind that it's not entirely good or desirable. According to the National Weather Service, Salisbury is actually 6.32 inches below normal rainfall for this time of the year. We are experiencing drought conditions that are severe enough to have triggered burn bans across the Lower Shore. The National Weather Service has been issuing special weather statements during the past few weeks warning of risk of fire due to dry conditions, low humidity and wind. NWS officials recommend caution with outdoor use of machinery, cigarettes, matches and any other activity that could spark a fire. That warning about use of machinery around dry "fuels" -- dry crops would fit that description -- is one more thing for farmers to be concerned about. Dry weather is a fire hazard in the short term, yet almost a blessing as well because, according to Somerset County Extension Agent Richard Nottingham, it can keep fungus out of wheat crops -- although at this point, most farmers do not have much planted yet at all. Wicomico County Farm Bureau President Lee Richardson pointed out that if it doesn't start raining soon, crops will become stressed and begin to have serious problems.

From Early Bird IF YOU GO: Corps unveils bay oyster plan WYE MILLS -- Members of the public will be able to ask questions and give feedback on a plan to restore the Chesapeake Bay's oyster population during an Eastern Shore open house this week hosted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The 272-page plan -- which will be on view Thursday at Chesapeake College in Wye Mills -- outlines a plan to pump up to \$7.85 billion into the construction of oyster reefs in sanctuaries in bay tributaries in both Maryland and Virginia. Some local watermen said they hadn't heard much about the plan. "I don't think nobody's going to protest it," said Danny Webster of Deal Island who serves on the Somerset County Oyster Committee as well as the state Tidal Fisheries Advisory Committee. The Corps plans to work in existing oyster sanctuaries that were established two years ago in Maryland, and there are no plans to increase the size of the sanctuary areas, said spokeswoman Ashley Williams. "We think they should be sufficient," she said. Priority areas on the Eastern Shore are the Chester, Choptank, Little Choptank, Manokin and Nanticoke rivers, Harris and Broad creeks in Maryland, the Tangier Sound in both states and the Pocomoke Sound in Virginia. Some work in Harris Creek off the Choptank River is expected to start in the next month, Williams said.

From Early Bird Salisbury engineer leads drive for bike paths SALISBURY -- If Matt Drew gets his wish, Salisbury might soon have bike lanes connecting the downtown area and the Salisbury University campus. Drew, executive vice president of AWB Engineers, said city roads are difficult, even dangerous, for cyclists to navigate and could see many improvements if the lanes were created. Drew said studies show bike lanes result in more people commuting by bike --which cycling advocates say means greener, healthier, happier, more vibrant communities. Working toward that goal, Drew's group, "bike-SBY," is currently aiming to collect 500 signatures by Earth Day on Sunday in favor of a Salisbury bike lane project.

CARROLL COUNTY TIMES

From Early Bird Md. legislation puts rules on fertilizer treatments ANNAPOLIS - New legislation is making stricter rules for how much fertilizer homeowners and lawn care professionals can apply to lawns in an effort to reduce nutrient pollution in the Chesapeake Bay. "According to our state chemist here at the Maryland Department of Agriculture, about 44 percent of the fertilizer sold in the state of Maryland is applied to lawns - that's a pretty amazing factoid," Maryland Agriculture Secretary Buddy Hance said during a press conference Monday. "Everybody assumes that agriculture is the biggest user, but lawns use almost as much fertilizer." For more than a decade, Maryland farmers have been working under state laws for fertilizer use through nutrient management plans, but now the state is requiring homeowners and lawn care professionals to be more accountable as well. The Fertilizer Use Act of 2011, which goes into full effect Oct. 1, 2013, will limit the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus that may be contained in lawn fertilizer products and puts new restrictions on how homeowners and lawn care professionals apply these products, both in the timing of the year and the rate at which these fertilizers can be applied. "For many years we've been working with farmers to help them manage their nutrients in the most profitable and environmentally friendly way, but now with this new legislation we're going to spend more time looking at what commercial fertilizer users and homeowners are doing with their lawns," said Jo Mercer, program manager for MDA's nutrient management program.

CUMBERLAND TIMES-NEWS

From Early Bird Letter: Shale commission meeting should be held locally I write to you today to protest and challenge your decision to hold meetings of the Maryland Marcellus Advisory Commission in locations far from Garrett County, and specifically the meeting scheduled for this Friday, April 20 in Hagerstown. I note the last meeting held in February was also at Hagerstown, and there was no meeting in March. Scheduling meetings so far away from those of us who are most affected is a disservice to residents of Garrett and Allegany counties. Whether we local people are pro-drilling, opposed to drilling, or simply want drilling to be done safely, we have the right to have commission meetings held in our community to observe and participate in the commission's deliberations. You and the commission seemed to make a commitment to this at your first meetings. Attendance at past meetings that were held locally has been very high, speakers have been respectful, and viewpoints expressed that are not simply those of lobbyists or financial interests. Scheduling commission meetings so far away is roughly equivalent to holding a meeting affecting Baltimore City in the state of New Jersey, or holding a meeting affecting Garrett County in Pittsburgh. This is not acceptable nor is it good, open government.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Md.)

From Early Bird Heavy rains, hot summer lead to D+ grade for Chesapeake Bay health (Tuesday) BALTIMORE — Heavy rains and a hot summer harmed the Chesapeake Bay's health last year, earning it the second worst grade on a yearly report card issued Tuesday by the University of Maryland's Center for Environmental Science. The center gave the bay a D+ in 2011, scoring only slightly better than in 2003, the worst year for bay health since the assessments began in 1986. Heavy spring and fall rains washed pollutants and sediments into the bay, and a hot, dry summer spurred algae blooms that lower oxygen levels. Flood waters from Tropical Storm Lee brought up to an inch and a half of sediment into the upper bay. Water clarity, meanwhile, continued to decline along with losses in bay grasses. Only two regions — the lower western shore of the bay, which got a C, and the Patapsco and Back Rivers improved, but still got a D-. The rest declined or remained the same. Virginia's Rappahannock, for example, went from a C- to a D+ as grasses suffered significant declines. The

Potomac River remained at a D, suffering declines in water quality but not enough to change its grade. The Patuxent and Elizabeth rivers received failing grades. The failing grade was the first for the Elizabeth, which has been polluted by industry and shipyards, and scored a grade of 0 for three indicators. Last spring, the bay got 42 out of 100 possible points, down from 46 the year before and the first drop in four years.

From Early Bird New solar panel parked atop BWI garage LINTHICUM — A parking garage at BWI airport is home to a new solar power array. Airport officials plan to unveil the new 505 kilowatt system atop BWI's Daily Garage on Thursday. The project is a joint venture between BWI Thurgood Marshall International Airport and Pepco Energy Services. The solar energy system was built on a canopy on the top level of the nine-story garage. The system is tied into the airport's electrical distribution system and power produced by the solar panels will offset power the garage's electricity use.

ANNAPOLIS CAPITAL

Report card gives Chesapeake Bay a D+ (yesterday) BALTIMORE - The Chesapeake Bay's pollution grade dipped again in 2011, earning a D+ in the wake of a series of unusual weather events. In a report card issued on Tuesday, the bay earned its second-lowest grades since 1986. The D+ is a downgrade from a C- the year before.

'Future Coast' to address flooding, sea level

(Monday) Maryland's land is sinking. The water is rising. What should be done? That question is the focus of a day-long event in Severna Park later this month. Academic researchers are using the event, called "Future Coast," to test how to best gather ideas from the public about protecting coastlines. "We're trying to really get a sense of what people think," said Karen Akerlof of George Mason University, who is organizing Future Coast.

SOUTHERN MARYLAND ONLINE

Making Calvert 'greener' Green Team preps for annual expo, 'Backyard to Bay' booklet. As the fourth annual Calvert County Green Expo and 42nd anniversary of Earth Day approach, a local citizens group is also taking an opportunity, through a new initiative, to remind county residents of what they can do as individuals to help Calvert "go green." The Calvert County Citizens Green Team, which hosts the Green Expo, is a volunteer group that aims "to promote sustainable lifestyles by identifying and sharing innovative green technologies ... and encouraging environmental stewardship among county citizens in their workplaces, homes and communities," according to the expo's website. Every year there are speakers, displays, demonstrations and various companies and agencies that turn out as vendors and exhibitors at the event, which is dedicated to creating a more energy-efficient environment in the county by showing others what they can do to contribute to the effort to go green.

POWER INDUSTRY NEWS

Maryland PSC Chooses Energy Center Project

Competitive Power Ventures, Inc. announced that after a multi-year process, its CPV St. Charles Energy Center has been chosen by the Maryland Public Service Commission to be built as part of the state initiative to upgrade its energy infrastructure for the 21st century. ... - Environmentally, this project reduces emissions of sulphur, nitrogen oxides and carbon dioxide by 65 to 99 percent compared to typical oil and coal fired plants. In addition, the project utilizes reclaimed water reducing nutrient discharge, helping clean up the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay.

VIRGINIA

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

From Early Bird Chesapeake Bay gets D+ in new report card Heavy rains and a hot summer harmed the

Chesapeake Bay's health last year, earning it the second-worst grade on a yearly report card issued Tuesday by the University of Maryland's Center for Environmental Science. The center gave the bay a D+ in 2011, scoring only slightly better than in 2003, the worst year for bay health since the assessments began in 1986. Heavy spring and fall rains washed pollutants and sediments into the bay, and a hot, dry summer spurred algae blooms that lower oxygen levels. Flood waters from Tropical Storm Lee brought up to an inch and a half of sediment into the upper bay. Water clarity, meanwhile, continued to decline along with losses in bay grasses. Only two regions - the lower western shore of the bay, which got a C, and the Patapsco River in Maryland and Back River in Virginia - improved but still got D-. The rest declined or remained the same. Virginia's Rappahannock River, for example, went from a C- to a D+ as grasses suffered significant declines. The Potomac River remained at a D, suffering declines in water quality but not enough to change its grade. The Patuxent and Elizabeth rivers received failing grades. The failing grade was the first for the Elizabeth, which has been polluted by industry and shipyards, and scored a grade of zero for three indicators. Last spring, the bay got 42 out of 100 possible points, down from 46 the year before and the first drop in four years. Rains carry sediments that can cloud water and bury bay grasses as well as pollutants such as nitrogen and phosphorus that can lead to oxygen-robbing algae blooms. Last year, heavy spring flows and two fall storms "brought a huge amount" of pollution and sediment into the bay, said Caroline Wicks, a UMCES project manager who presented the results. The weather this year has been cooperating so far with dry weather that hasn't washed much pollution into the bay, Wicks said. "Hopefully, that means we'll have better scores this coming summer. However, with the warmer air temperatures we might have another hot, dry summer," Wicks said. Nicholas DiPasquale, director of the federal Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Program, said the bay had received what he considered a failing grade in the report card but also noted the report card "gives a snapshot in time." "We also have to look at the long-term and we see a lot of positive indicators," DiPasquale said.

From Early Bird Chesterfield making progress on rewriting comprehensive plan CHESTERFIELD, Va. -- A rewrite of the Chesterfield County comprehensive plan is beginning to take shape. The Planning Commission on Tuesday afternoon unanimously approved the first four draft chapters of a plan that will guide future growth and development decisions in the county. The five-member commission also voted to cancel a May 3 special meeting, at which they were to discuss the plan's housing and environmental quality chapters. Those chapters will be on the May 15 work session agenda. One of the most-discussed items Tuesday was the inclusion of a sentence that includes employment projections for the county — 166,000 jobs in the county in 2035, according to the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission. "I caution the commission when you're putting (in) these employment trends ... based on what they think will happen, the risk is as they change their numbers, you may have to go back and change the plan to reflect their revisions," said Planning Commission Chairman Russell J. Gulley. Nearly 114,000 people are currently employed by businesses within the county, a number that has been decreasing in the past few years, according to the draft comprehensive plan. The regional planning commission is revising its projections and another report may be released soon, but it may not be complete within Chesterfield's comprehensive plan timeline, said acting planning manager Steve Haasch.

NORFOLK VIRGINIAN-PILOT

From Early Bird Proposed Norfolk complex dealt a setback (Tuesday) NORFOLK-- City leaders envisioned luxurious condominiums and townhomes with sweeping water views when they rezoned more than a dozen acres on Little Creek Inlet in 2006. Now, they concede, their grand plans designed to mimic developments in Annapolis, Md., were poorly written. "The zoning language did not spit out little Annapolis," Martin Thomas Jr., an attorney and Norfolk Planning Commission member, said last week. "It allowed lesser-desired designs." One of those so-called "lesser-desired designs" has caused a furor in the nearby, upscale East Beach community. Developers John Biagas and Buddy Gadams want to build East Beach Marina Apartments, a 138-unit, five-story complex, across Pretty Lake Avenue facing East Beach. The \$28 million project would generate about \$500,000 to the city in taxes each year, they say, and would include a health club, indoor parking garage, pool, waterfront walkway open to the public and a pier designed to service "super yachts." "This is a quality development people there should welcome," Biagas said. But East Beach residents have turned out en masse at public discussions to oppose the development, including a meeting last week of the Norfolk Wetlands Board, where the project was dealt a major setback. With

about 50 East Beach residents in attendance, the board voted 5-1 to deny Gadams and Biagas a wetlands permit. Residents say the apartments would cram too many people onto too little space. "It would bring a lot of people, a lot of cars, a lot of congestion to our neighborhood," East Beach resident John Greene said...Gadams said the project previously won approval from the Army Corps of Engineers, department of health, Department of Environmental Quality, Planning Commission and the wetlands board. Gadams said had he not agreed to a request from the city's fire department to enlarge an access road, he would not have needed another wetlands permit. "We've played by the rules," Gadams said. "What they did to us was unlawful." However, wetlands board members said they voted solely on the merits of the permit. Board Chairman William Dashiell twice cautioned speakers not to mention issues such as crowding or the project's design. "We can't consider those issues," he said.

From Early Bird Senate Democrats kill Va. budget over transit project RICHMOND For the third time this year, Virginia's two-year budget has died in the Senate's partisan crossfire, risking shutdown of state government operations and construction projects and leaving local government budgets in limbo.

ROANOKE TIMES

From Early Bird Containment efforts and rain could bring relief Firefighters Tuesday made significant headway against six blazes across the region, gaining an upper hand in what had become a struggle against flames and unruly weather conditions. Officials with the U.S. Forest Service said the Monday and Tuesday efforts to eliminate fuel — dry leaves, logs and the like — were a success. Near Edith Gap on Monday night, a new 5-acre fire was squelched. Stationed at the Barbours Creek fire near the Craig and Alleghany county lines, Forest Service spokeswoman Barbara Walker said some firefighters could be sent to other locations — or home — at the end of Tuesday's shift. "We've got rain coming tonight, but it wouldn't have been enough had we not gotten rid of all those fuels," she said. "All of them are winding down, for the most part, but I don't think anyone's going to be taking too big a breath of relief until we get a good rain."

From Early Bird Spring officially bee-gins: Society brings 2 million bees to New River Valley CHRISTIANSBURG — Spring has arrived and brought with it humming colonies that have hobbyists throughout the region enthused. Gardener Apiaries from Baxley, Ga., delivered 1.8 million bees Tuesday for members of the New River Valley Beekeepers Association to tend and marvel over. For \$86, beekeepers received a 3-pound package with 12,000 bees, including one queen. The bees' wings were dampened to limit their flight and the crates were stocked with syrup. The queen was stowed in her own special compartment, and will lay 2,000 eggs per day. Bees have a life span of five weeks. According to NRVBA President Mark Chorba, the organization has more than 200 members throughout the New River Valley and Roanoke. This large transport of bees happens every year, and is something members look forward to. "Every year our members want to increase their colony," he said. He parked a van in front of the Christiansburg Health and Human Services Building, and buyers who had placed orders stopped by periodically to pick up their packages. In addition to fresh honey, beekeepers can observe the intricate work their bees carry out, can enjoy fuller, more fruitful plants in their yards because of increased pollination, and can relax listening to the peaceful buzzing. The biggest problem most people have to overcome is the fear of being stung, Chorba said. For the most part, bees are non-aggressive and gentle, he said. Chorba many times picked up or touched a bee to demonstrate that they typically won't sting unless provoked or defending a nest. He advises those interested in beekeeping to find a mentor who already keeps bees, because there are many intricacies that simply reading a book won't teach.

LYNCHBURG NEWS AND ADVANCE

From Early Bird Recycling event at Bedford County landfill Saturday Bedford County's department of solid waste will, at no charge, collect household hazardous waste and electronics for recycling during an event Saturday at the county landfill on Virginia 43 south of Bedford.

MISCELLANEOUS

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT

From Early Bird 24 States Challenge EPA Over Mercury, Air Toxics Standards for Utilities Twenty-four states, including Michigan, Ohio, and Texas, are among 25 petitioners filing lawsuits in a federal appeals court to challenge EPA's mercury and air toxics standards for power plants, bringing the total number of lawsuits over the rule to 30. Texas is challenging the rule because the emissions limits may not be technically feasible for power plants, Andrea Morrow, a spokeswoman for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, says. The rule requires utilities to use maximum achievable control technology to address emissions.

From Early Bird Petroleum Marketers Ask EPA to Withdraw Proposed Storage Tank Rule The Petroleum Marketers Association of America ask EPA to withdraw a proposed rule that would strengthen regulations on underground storage tanks. PMAA, a collection of trade associations representing petroleum marketers, calls the proposed rule "seriously flawed" in comments and says EPA failed to obtain adequate input from small businesses. Comments from several smaller groups also call for the agency to withdraw the rule. The National Air Transportation Association asks EPA to withdraw the portion of the rule involving airlines and commence a separate rulemaking.

From Early Bird House Panel Approves Bill to Delay EPA Air Rules Pending Gas Price Study A House Energy and Commerce subcommittee approves a Republican bill that would prevent EPA from finalizing three environmental rules affecting gasoline production until their impact on gasoline prices can be studied. The Gasoline Regulations Act, approved by the Subcommittee on Energy and Power, would prevent EPA from finalizing three pending rules—to establish new Tier 3 vehicle and gasoline standards, greenhouse gas standards for petroleum refineries, and new ozone air quality standards—until at least six months after an interagency task force submits its final report to Congress.

ITHACA JOURNAL

From Early Bird Natural gas drilling talk scheduled for 6:15 pm Wednesday at BU Tom Wilber, author of the soon to be released "Under the Surface" is scheduled to give a talk about natural gas drilling at 6:15 p.m. Wednesday at Binghamton University, Lecture Hall 2. The talk -- The Future of Shale Gas Development in New York -- looks at the many issues unfolding in the legislative, executive and judicial branches, as well as market conditions, that will influence shale gas development in years to come. It will also recap some of the history of gas development in New York that led us to where we are now, and how the problems in Dimock, Pa., contributed to the national anti-fracking movement. Tom Wilber has been in the newspaper business for more than 20 years, including 17 years with the Binghamton Press & Sun-Bulletin, covering business, health, and environment beats. He has reported on shale gas development in New York and Pennsylvania since 2008; and he was among the first reporters to provide daily coverage of events in Dimock Pennsylvania, which have since become iconic of the national controversy over fracking. For his coverage, he won top honors in Best of Gannett beat reporting in 2010.

WASTE MANAGEMENT WORLD

From Early Bird EPA Recognizes the Borough of State College for Curbside Food Recycling (EPA News Release) Today the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency marked the beginning of Earth Week by recognizing State College Borough for its curbside food recycling program. State College is the only town in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that is conducting curbside food waste collection for composting. The program began as a pilot and is slated to go borough-wide in 2013. During the ceremony today at State College's composting facility, EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin also welcomed the borough and Centre County Recycling and Refuse Authority as the newest members to join EPA's Food Recovery Challenge. "Earth Week is an excellent time to raise awareness about the importance of recycling food waste. By diverting food waste away from landfills,

the borough is saving money on disposal fees, reducing harmful air emissions and producing a valuable soil product when it is composted. EPA is pleased to recognize State College Borough and Centre County and welcome them into our Food Recovery Challenge," said EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

From Early Bird Natural gas drilling creates spinoff jobs in wildlife, software BINGHAMTON, N.Y. — Before work begins on a gas well or pipeline in northern Pennsylvania, Merlin Benner or one of his colleagues walks the land looking for timber rattlesnakes, a protected species.

"When we find them, we're required to move them far enough away to get them out of danger and out of sight of the workers," Benner said. "State regulations are in place to protect the snakes, but the clients are more concerned about the safety issue." Job creation is one of the main arguments in favor of natural gas drilling using the controversial technology of high-volume hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking." Industry opponents, who believe health and environmental risks outweigh economic gains, say job numbers are inflated and the economic impact will be a boom-to-bust one. But jobs are being created, not only in the gas industry and the hotels and restaurants that cater to its rig workers, but also in numerous companies that are filling industry-related niches. Benner, whose company is Wildlife Specialists of Wellsboro, Pa., is among business owners who have started or expanded because of the shale gas boom that began about four years ago in Pennsylvania. Drilling is expected to spread into New York if the state Department of Environmental Conservation completes its four-year review and approves it, possibly this summer. Benner worked for the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for 15 years as a wildlife biologist before retiring early in 2007 to start his company. "We went from one person five years ago to about 15 full-time now and 15 to 20 seasonal workers in the summers," he said. President Obama said in his State of the Union address in January that natural gas drilling could create 600,000 jobs nationally. Benner's company also delineates wetlands, looks for endangered Indiana bats, and conducts habitat surveys. The firm illustrates the diversity of businesses that are directly involved with natural gas well and pipeline projects in the Marcellus Shale, a deep, gas-rich rock formation underlying southern New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia. John Payne, owner of Payne's Cranes in Bainbridge, said his company had been busy erecting modular homes until the economy tanked in 2008. "We were doing about 60 homes a year and that dropped to maybe a dozen," Payne said. "The gas development came along at just the right time for us. It's the best opportunity I've had in 42 years, no exaggeration." Payne's Cranes unloads gas compressors and erects the buildings that house them, as well as erecting, disassembling and transporting drilling rigs. "We've modernized considerably since we started working in Pennsylvania three years ago," Payne said.

From Early Bird Obama and Romney on energy, environmental issues WASHINGTON - A look at where President Barack Obama and Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney stand on energy and environmental issues:

OBAMA: Ordered temporary moratorium on deep-water drilling after the massive BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico but has pushed for more oil and gas drilling overall. Approved drilling plan in Arctic Ocean opposed by environmentalists. Now proposes that Congress give oil market regulators more power to control price manipulation by speculators and stiffer fines for doing so. Achieved historic increases in fuel economy standards for automobiles that will save money at the pump while raising the cost of new vehicles. Achieved first-ever regulations on heat-trapping gases blamed for global warming and on toxic mercury pollution from power plants. Spent heavily on green energy and has embraced nuclear power as a clean source. Failed to persuade a Democratic Congress to pass limits he promised on carbon emissions. Shelved plan to toughen health standards on lung-damaging smog. Rejected Keystone XL oil pipeline from Canada because of environmental concerns but supports fast-track approval of a segment of it. Proposes ending subsidies to oil industry but has failed to persuade Congress to do so.

ROMNEY: Supports opening the Atlantic and Pacific outer continental shelves to drilling, as well as Western lands, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and offshore Alaska; and supports exploitation of shale oil deposits. Wants to reduce obstacles to coal, natural gas and nuclear energy development, and accelerate drilling permits in areas where exploration has already been approved for developers with good safety records. Says green power has

yet to become viable and the causes of climate change are unknown. Proposes to remove carbon dioxide from list of pollutants controlled by Clean Air Act and amend clean water and air laws to ensure the cost of complying with regulations is balanced against environmental benefit. Says cap and trade would "rocket energy prices." Blames high gas prices on Obama's decisions to limit oil drilling in environmentally sensitive areas and on overzealous regulation.

From Early Bird NJ holding hearings on beach access rule changes AVALON, N.J. - New Jersey environmental officials are holding public hearings on proposed changes to the state's beach access rules. The sessions in Avalon and Long Branch on Wednesday will let people comment on changes that include protecting off-hours access to the shoreline for fishermen. But beach access advocates say the state is giving too much control over who can reach the beach, and where they can do it, to shore towns that have a history of trying to keep outsiders off their sand. It was Avalon's court case that overturned the old rules that imposed more stringent access rules on shore towns.

From Early Bird House bill increases hunter access to public lands WASHINGTON - A hunting bill passed by the House on Tuesday makes it harder to restrict hunting and fishing on public lands and ensures that the hunter's arsenal will continue to include lead bullets. The legislation, which passed 274-146, also allows those who have legally hunted polar bears in Canada to bring their trophies home. Republican sponsors said the bill, which faces an uncertain future in the Senate, protects sportsmen from bureaucratic restrictions. Democratic opponents said it was unneeded because 85 percent of federal land is open to hunting and called it a sop to the gun lobby. The measure requires federal land managers to support hunting and fishing on Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management land. The BLM can only close public lands to recreational shooting for specific reasons such as national security and fire safety. It must also submit a report to Congress detailing the location and evidence justifying any closure. The lead issue refers to efforts by environmentalists to ban the use of lead in ammunition and fishing tackle. They say lead poisoning kills 10 million to 20 million birds and other animals every year and that hunters who eat what they hunt have also been shown to have higher levels of lead in their bloodstreams. The Environmental Protection Agency, in 2010 and again this year, rejected petitions from conservation and some hunting groups to ban lead bullets, shotgun pellets and fishing tackle under the Toxic Substances Control Act, saying the issue was not within the agency's jurisdiction. The House bill would give legal backing to that position, by clearly limiting the EPA's authority under the Toxic Substances Control Act. It amends that act to allow for the sales of traditional ammunition and fishing tackle. Congress in 1976 banned the EPA from regulating ammunition, but anti-lead groups have argued that that ban does not prohibit the agency from regulating the components of ammunition. Bill Snape, senior counsel for the Center for Biological Diversity, one of the petitioners, said there are many commercially available alternatives to lead ammunition. "No one wants to take away hunting by those who hunt by the rules," he said. "What we are trying to do is stop hunting with ammunition that harms everything in sight."

AP Newsbreak: EPA issues first-ever rules to control air pollution from fractured gas wells Updated: Wednesday, April 18, 11:37 AM WASHINGTON — The Obama administration is issuing the first-ever standards to control air pollution from gas wells that are drilled using a method called hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. But the administration, which has strongly backed natural gas drilling, made significant concessions to the oil and gas industry. The regulation is expected to be officially announced later Wednesday. Administration officials who briefed The Associated Press in advance of the announcement said drillers would be given an additional two years to comply with the rules. Wells drilled in low-pressure areas which release less air pollution would also be exempt. Hydraulic fracturing has spawned a natural gas-drilling boom, but has raised environmental concerns for its toll on water and air.

PR NEWswire

More Than Half of Americans Polled Don't Know That Cigarette Butts Are the No. 1 Littered Item in the Nation WASHINGTON, April 18, 2012 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Last year, according to 2011 *The Tax Burden on Tobacco* report, Americans purchased more than 287 billion cigarettes. A vast number of those cigarette butts, including the filters, will be flicked into the environment, landing along waterways, parks, beaches and public

roads. According to new research conducted by Legacy[®], a public health non-profit located in Washington, DC, more than half of the Americans surveyed last month reported not knowing that cigarette butts are the number one littered item every year on U.S. roadways and beaches. In observance of Earth Day on April 22, Legacy is working to raise awareness about the negative impact cigarette filters and discarded cigarette butts have on the environment. Cigarette butts contain heavy metals that can leach into waterways, posing a lethal threat to aquatic life. They are costly to local communities to clean up and dispose of as well.

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADER

Pac-12 Wins EPA College Green Power Challenge The Pac-12 college athletic conference has claimed top spot among the 30 conferences in the EPA's College and University Green Power Challenge, which rewards the conference that buys the most green power in a year. ... The University of Pennsylvania – part of the Ivy League – continues to be the top individual school in the challenge, beating out 72 other schools by buying over 200 million kWh of green power, or 48 percent of its power purchases. In other inter-collegiate news, American University in Washington D.C. was this week named “Grand Champion” of the 2012 RecycleMania Tournament. American won the eight-week tourney, which aims to increase recycling rates at college campuses nationwide, for recycling a higher percentage of its total waste than any of the other 604 colleges involved in the challenge. American was also named one of 16 colleges to gain the highest score in The Princeton Review's Guide to 322 Green Colleges. Other universities named among the top 16 include Oregon State, Virginia Tech and Harvard. The Princeton Review does not release individual scores for the colleges in the guide – other than for those scoring top marks. For a full list of the 16 top schools, [click here](#).

EVENING SUN

Cornell researching local well water prior to natural gas development NORWICH – Cornell University is conducting a baseline study of Chenango County well water to determine the amount of methane and dissolved solids in wells prior to any high volume hydraulic fracturing for natural gas. The study by Cornell's Soil and Water Lab will show if methane is present in a well and whether it is from biological or geological sources. The study will also look for dissolved solids such as barium and bromide that may be linked with hydraulic fracturing for natural gas.

ENEWSPF

EPA Publishes Human Health Benchmarks for Pesticides in Water Washington, DC--(ENEWSPF)--April 18, 2012. In the face of widespread pesticide contamination of U.S. waterways and the lack of drinking water standards for hundreds of pesticides, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced new health and environmental benchmarks for acute pesticide effects, postponing action on chronic effects to an unspecified future date. While a step forward in identifying hazards associated with pesticide use and exposure, benchmarks have been notoriously limited in fully assessing risks because of ongoing deficiencies in analyzing the complexities associated with chemical exposure, specifically a failure to evaluate the effects of chemical mixtures, synergistic effects, and health effects associated with consistent low-dose exposure.

NEW YORK TIMES

Tuesday Editorial: The Big Spill, Two Years Later Friday is the second anniversary of the explosion at BP's Deepwater Horizon rig that killed 11 workers and spilled upwards of five million barrels of oil into the Gulf of Mexico. Thanks partly to nature's resilience, some progress has been made. The gulf is open to fishing, beaches are mostly clean and President Obama has resurrected an ambitious oil exploration plan that he shelved immediately after the spill. But the healing from this extraordinary act of corporate carelessness is far from complete, and there is important work to be done to minimize the chances that such a disaster will happen again. Here are central issues that remain unresolved:

An Enemy in Your Sand Castle The Environmental Protection Agency has had guidelines in place for water quality along beaches for more than a quarter-century. In 2010 alone, the Natural Resource Defense Council

estimates, 24,091 beaches were closed or were subject to advisories because of unsafe levels of fecal matter in the water. But unless there is visible raw sewage on the shoreline, beaches in the United States are rarely closed because of poor sand quality. Sand is usually thought of as benign — so harmless, in fact, that toddlers are routinely buried up to their necks in the stuff. There is, however, an equally squirm-inducing array of microbes in beach sand, and, depending on beachgoers' habits, the potential for even greater exposure. Microbes can persist longer in sand that is sheltered from ultraviolet radiation and predators. In January, a study by E.P.A. researchers published in the journal *Epidemiology* found a positive correlation between exposure to beach sand and an increased risk of gastrointestinal illness.

NRDC - SWITCHBOARD

Leading Companies Already Meet EPA's "Fracking" Air Pollution Standards One of the biggest sources of dangerous air pollution from natural gas “fracking” is the whoosh of pollution that rushes from the well, like popping the top on a soda can, in the first few days after fracking is completed and the well is about to start production. What comes out are hundreds of tons of chemicals ranging from cancer-causing benzene, smog-forming volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and climate-changing methane. Across the industry, which fracks or refracks more than 20,000 wells each year, that amounts to millions of tons of pollution that does serious harm to human health and the environment. These are not only dangerous pollutants. They are also wasted products that can be recovered at a profit – across the industry, more than a half a trillion cubic feet of wasted gas. ...Later today, the Environmental Protection Agency is going to issue common-sense and money-saving standards to begin curbing this pollution by requiring drillers to undertake “green completions” (also called “reduced emission completions”) – using mobile, trailer-mounted tanks and equipment pictured below to capture these gases before they escape into the air and route them back into pipelines for sale as natural gas and other valuable chemicals.

BLOOMBERG NEWS

EPA to Delay Fracking Rules Until 2015: API U.S. Environmental Protection Agency rules for gas drilling will delay a requirement to capture air pollution at the well until 2015, Howard Feldman, research director of the American Petroleum Institute, said. A delay in implementing some standards for new gas wells deals with a top demand of the Washington-based group, which represents companies that drill for oil and gas. The EPA, which is scheduled to issue the rules today, rejected a bid by the group to exempt a number of wells from the requirements altogether, he said. “Overall, EPA has made some important adjustment in the rules that allow” the industry to meet the requirements, Feldman said in an interview. “Most of the changes were constructive.” The EPA proposed the rule last year to focus on hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, in which millions of gallons of chemically treated water are forced underground to break up rock and free gas. The method has opened up vast new shale gas deposits and helped push natural gas prices to the lowest level in a decade. The original EPA draft would have put the rule into effect in about 60 days.

REUTERS

US EPA to delay drilling emissions standards-API WASHINGTON, April 18 (Reuters) - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will delay implementation of rules on smog-forming emissions from natural gas and oil wells when it finalizes the standards later on Wednesday, an industry group that was briefed on the rules said. Drillers will be required to put equipment on wells including ones that use hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, to capture so-called volatile organic compound emissions by January 2015, a source at the American Petroleum Institute said. The phased-in implementation of rules would be a delay of more than two years.

AMERICAN RIVERS BLOG

Float-In for Earth Day! Do you love paddling and being out on the river? What better way to spend your Earth Day than on the water with friends? Good news then – our good friends at the Clean Water Network are hosting the first ever Float-In Earth Day on the Anacostia River. The event is to highlight the upcoming 40th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, and is also an opportunity to celebrate our country's beautiful rivers, lakes, streams, creeks, bays

and coastal areas, and to say no to rollbacks to clean water like the current Chesapeake Dirty Water Act.